



DEPARTMENT OF DINÉ EDUCATION

THE NAVAJO NATION

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PRESS RELEASE

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DEPARTMENT OF DINE EDUCATION HOLDS A TWO-DAY CONFERENCE

Window Rock, AZ. August 25 – 26, the 2016 Teachers Institute was held in the John Pinto Conference Center, at the Navajo Department of Transportation. Over 100 participants composed of teachers, school administrators, and school board members, attended the two-day conference. On both days, Dr. Calvin White, Education Administrator, ODSI, provided the warm welcome address.

The guest presentation was Dr. Greg Cajete (Santa Clara Pueblo) and Associate Professor of Education, at the University of New Mexico. He spoke on "Creating Culturally Responsive Curriculum for American Indian Students: A Creative Process Model.

On both days, Kee Ike Yazzie, DODE Senior Planner enjoyed the conference. "Dr. Cajete's presentation was very interesting and enlightening," Kee said. "For example, significant sites in Chaco Canyon was mathematically lay-out. All this cultural knowledge need to be share with students. We could use cultural knowledge in math and science."

The 2016 Teacher Institute Conference included several presentations and a group work. The audience received an introduction material on the overview of culturally responsive curriculum development and watched the video "Taking Traditions to Tomorrow". The video shows Native American tribes contributed important culture and scientific disciplines. This is an excellent video for Native American Indian youth.

Other presentations included "Building Bridges to Western Science through Culture Knowledge" and "An indigenous Science Education Curriculum Model".

According to the presentation, the main idea of the "Building Bridges to Western Science through Culture Knowledge" is seeking recognition of indigenous knowledge. Reasons for indigenous knowledge may include Equity and social justice; teachers may change the marginalization of native students by introducing indigenous knowledge, and apply student interest and participation. Under this scheme, science teachers need to acknowledge and respect Native culture and knowledge.

On the second day, Dr. White gave a presentation on "The Navajo Nation Accountability Workbook. Dr. Hollie Kulago, Principal Education Specialist, ODSI, provided two presentations: Nation Building and Tribal Critical Race Theory and Diné Education Teacher Training Manual Initiative. "Dr. Kulago's presentation on Critical Race Theory ought to be incorporated into school curriculum," Kee said. "It enhances the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation by incorporating all those ideas of the Theory into school curriculum."

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Pursuant Title 10 Navajo Nation Code, the Department of Diné is the administrative agency of the Navajo Nation with responsibility and authority to implement and enforced, on the Navajo Nation, educational laws of the Navajo Nation. Dr. Tommy Lewis is the Superintendent of Schools and Timothy Benally is the Assistant Superintendent of School.